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Letter dated 28 December 2001 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have been instructed by my Government to write to you in connection with the forthcoming consideration of the question of the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP) by the Security Council.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia highly appreciates the crucial role that UNMOP plays in maintaining stability and the regime of security and in strengthening confidence in Prevlaka, as well as its contribution to the creation of conditions for solving the disputed issue of the Peninsula.

In the context of strengthening regional stability, the normalization and promotion of relations with neighbour States are among the most important foreign policy priorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is in good faith and on the basis of respect for mutual interests that my country is ready to address all problems. This has been evinced throughout 2001 as Yugoslavia has undertaken to solve many questions concerning its relations with its neighbours, the former Yugoslav republics, from the establishment of diplomatic relations and the conclusion of various bilateral agreements to its inclusion in regional initiatives. Such a cooperative approach is also evident in Yugoslavia's relations with the Republic of Croatia, including the disputed issue of Prevlaka.

Since the last extension of the mandate of UNMOP, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Croatia have taken a number of important steps. Aware that a mutually acceptable solution can be reached only through direct negotiations, the Foreign Ministers of the two countries issued a joint statement at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly to the effect that agreement had been reached, inter alia, to proceed urgently to the elaboration of a protocol on the principle of the identification of borders and delimitation on land and at sea. On 10 December 2001, the first meeting was held within the scope of the protocol, at which an inter-state border commission was established.

Within the purview of the Commission, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is ready to commence work immediately on the establishment of the border with the Republic of Croatia along its entire length and, in that context, considers that the extension by the Security Council of the mandate of UNMOP for another six months would be very useful. Such a decision would facilitate the joint effort in the quest for a solution to the disputed issue of Prevlaka.

01-71846 (E) 311201

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vladislav **Mladenović**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.